First Selectman's Diversity Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, December 14, 2021, 12:00 pm

Join Zoom Meeting: https://greenwichct.zoom.us/j/84470529609?pwd=VitLdGt5bkZEdFVlMFZXV2p0eWttZz09
Password: 4175839

In Attendance:
Gary Charles, Dawn Kaam, Mary Lee Kiernan, Demetria Nelson, Gaby Rattner, Bobby Walker, Jr., Ted Pardoe

Call to Order
Bobby Walker, Jr. 12:03pm

1. Approval of Minutes from November 2021
   Motion: Bobby Walker, Jr., Second: Gaby Rattner

2. Update of Last Meeting
   • Bobby is still looking for a short video of Dedrick Asante-Muhammad’s work; he is a proposed presenter for the socio-economic panel

3. First Selectman’s proposal for a new name; update on mission statement
   • First Selectman approves of the mission statement developed by the group
   • First Selectman suggests changing the committee’s name to “The First Selectman’s Committee on Diversity and Unity”
     o Fred is concerned that a focus on diversity excludes “all that unites us”
     o Demetria suggested proposing “Diversity and Inclusion”
     o Dawn suggested “Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Unity”
   • Gary’s comment: we have not been functioning as an advisory group for the First Selectman
     o The role of the group has evolved from affirmative action in hiring of Town employees to a focus on diversity and serving as a resource for the Town
     o Demetria: the role of the committee must be clearly defined, we must determine how we can be used as a resource, and ensure that the Town and First selectman are aware of this
       ▪ The committee can ensure that certain concerns are heard
   • Bobby will propose “The First Selectman’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee” or The First Selectman’s Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Unity Committee”
     o Bobby suggests considering “belonging” in place of unity”
       ▪ This term is widely used in independent school spaces
       ▪ “Belonging” is different and suggests that one is not simply physically present in a space, but is personally accepted and included in that space
       ▪ Group agrees that belonging should be considered in the new name of the group
   • Bobby will ensure that the First Selectman appreciates that the name should incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion as an important combination to emphasis
     o Group acknowledged that the term “diversity” might be misunderstood and needs to be qualified with other supportive terms
     o The group’s name must be in alignment with the mission and vision statement
     o The values of diversity, equity, and inclusion are expressed in the mission statement Fred approved, so the Committee’s name should reflect these values
   • Bobby will share the committee’s thoughts with the First Selectman

4. Update on Socioeconomic diversity panel
   • Ted, Bobby, Gaby, and Demetria have a plan to engage clients of Human Services, CCI, and maybe other organizations in Town
     o Event will take place in late January early February
     o Still working to determining the ideal keynote from out of town
       ▪ Demetria reached out to the individuals that conducted the needs assessment for Greenwich United Way from Fairfield University
         • They would like more information concerning the topic of the panel and their expected level of participation and follow up about their availability
   • Bobby has been in communication with Dedrick Asante-Muhammad
The speaker focuses on the wealth gap through a racial lens
  ▪ Is this the focus of the presentation we want to offer?
  ▪ Do we want to explore wealth inequality more holistically?
Group discussion about this speaker's potential focus
  ▪ Concern about alienating people, but this topic is relevant
  ▪ Consider balancing this message with that of others to encourage engagement with a broader audience
  
Mary Lee encourages a conversation that includes race, as demographic dimensions must be included
  ▪ ML suggests that the conversation might also include gender
    ▪ CT poverty data shows that women with young children dominate the lower end of the data on poverty
    ▪ Fairfield County’s Community Foundation works closely with Data Haven, terrific source of data, includes municipal profiles

5. Announcements from Committee members

YWCA Greenwich
  • Annual Dr. King event: Tuesday, January 25th
    ▪ Preliminary title: Gender Beyond the Binary
    ▪ Will reach out to committee members and community organizations to be co-sponsors, will include logos
      ▪ Anticipate 25-30 co-sponsors

Greenwich High School:
  • Diversity Awareness Week @ GHS, February 28 to March 4
    ▪ Theme: Acknowledging the beauty within all individuals and communities
    ▪ Requesting that committee members share connections with speakers and presenters

6. Adjournment: 12:34pm

Next Meeting: Tuesday, January 11, 2022